

## Work-Life Balance Redefined

# Balance is Within Reach

**Balance.** It's harder than ever to achieve these days. In trying to stay on top of everything in both your work and your personal life, it's easy to feel overwhelmed. The stress of doing it all can affect your health and lead to unhealthy habits. People seem to struggle with more stress now, as technology has intruded on family time and communication.

But remember that getting balance in your life is not out of your reach. First, it may help to stop and look closely at everything in your daily life. Identify the activities that are causing you the most stress. Also identify the things that might be missing in your life. Then, step by step, you can begin to rearrange your life in small ways to restore some balance.

In this issue of *Your Source*, you'll learn how to:

- Identify those things in life that are causing you the most stress.
- Pinpoint your core values and spend more time on things that are important to you.
- Find ways to deal with feelings of being overwhelmed.
- Tap into tools that can help you gain more control of your work and life.

*Learn how to make small changes that can help you manage your health, your work and your family life better.*

**Go Online Today!** Log on to access *Work-Life Balance Redefined* and other helpful resources in the *Spotlight* section, and share this with your co-workers and family members. Additionally, if your agency participates in FOH's Work-Life Program, call 1-800-222-0364 or 888-262-7848 TTY to learn more.



Employee Assistance Program  
*We care, just call.*

**1-800-222-0364**

1-888-262-7848 TTY Users  
[www.FOH4YOU.com](http://www.FOH4YOU.com)



*Log on here!*



## Feeling Overwhelmed?

If you're having trouble keeping balance in your life—as many people do—there are ways to start gaining control of your challenges, one step at a time. Keep these steps in mind:

*Shut it off!* Try to respond to work-related emails or posts only during work hours.

*Set up a basic to-do list.* Being able to cross a few items off your list each day will help you feel more confident and in control.

*Give it a rest.* Taking small breaks throughout the day will help you deal with stress and give you the mental stamina to finish projects.

*Find healthy activities that work for you.* Set up an exercise routine that is challenging for you in a fun way. Also make sure you eat right and get enough sleep. This helps you bounce back better.

*Take care of yourself.* Always make some time for yourself—and maybe even schedule it—to read, do yoga, listen to music, or do other fun things that make you feel good.

*Ask for help.* Seek advice from your FOH Employee Assistance Program. These professionals can help you find solutions to work-life challenges.

# *Focusing on Priorities Gives you Room to Breathe*

It seems like there are more moving parts to modern life today than ever before. Often we feel the need to get lots of things done—and done quickly. Plus, messages on portable devices can reach us anytime, anywhere. We feel we need to be available 24/7.

The constant, plugged-in rush to achieve can be harmful. It can lead to stress, illness, depression and strain on the relationships that matter most to us. Can we really do it all?

## **Get Your Time on Track**

The good news is that doing it all is not necessary. You have the power to reach a healthier work-life balance. To do this, develop your own personal strategy for gaining more control.

You might start by tracking everything you do for one week. This includes work-related and personal activities. You may be surprised to see the areas where time is getting away from you. Try to “unplug” where possible.

## **Learn to Say “No” Sometimes**

It's not realistic to think you can do everything in life all the time. To combat unrealistic expectations, try these strategies:

- Take stock of the activities that aren't helping your career or personal life, and try to reduce the time you spend on them.
- You can say no to requests; don't feel guilty if you need to decline a request sometimes.
- Try to see where your priorities have shifted too far in one direction or another, and then do something about it.

When you've cleared some of the extra tasks, you may find that you have more room in your life for activities that bring you pleasure.

## **Tap Into Helpful Resources**

FOH's member website has helpful tools. These include work-life balance tips, quizzes, exercises and articles. They can help you identify areas of life that you can reorganize to save time and energy.

## **Which strategy doesn't help with balance?**

- A. Ask family and friends for help.
- B. Prioritize the day's tasks.
- C. Set your goals high.
- D. Be efficient and work smarter.

Correct answer is C. Instead of trying to do it all perfectly, it's often better to establish realistic goals and ease up on yourself when possible.

## *Now That's an Idea!*

### **Living by Your Values**

When you live and work according to your values, it's easier to keep stress under control. To help you identify your values and set priorities, ask yourself these questions:

- What do I most like to do?
- What am I most drawn to?
- Do I ever lose track of time and really involve myself in something?
- What do I feel really passionate about?

Though work will always be a part of life, there are ways to move your life toward the things you value. If you start including the activities that are closest to your personal values, you will be able to feel better and have less stress.